

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO COL. JOHN K. WILSON III

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Col. John K. Wilson III as he retires after 26 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Air Force.

Colonel Wilson is retiring from his position as the executive director of operations, Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Legislative Liaison at the Pentagon. In addition to this position, he also served as Chief, Congressional Inquiries Division. In a previous legislative liaison tour, Colonel Wilson served as a Congressional Inquiries Officer as well as a Senate Liaison Officer. In these critical positions, Colonel Wilson not only served the Air Force well, but he also assisted the U.S. Congress.

During his tenure, he worked with hundreds of Members of Congress, responding to their constituent inquiries, lending his expertise in Air Force matters and handling a myriad of unique situations. Colonel Wilson's professionalism, diplomacy, and insight were essential to the flawless planning and execution of well over 100 Congressional worldwide fact-finding travels. His comprehensive knowledge of the legislative process and thorough understanding of Air Force issues made him the perfect liaison between the Pentagon and Capitol Hill.

Mr. President, I join with my colleagues who have directly benefited from the superb support Colonel Wilson has provided the Congress and executive branch, in congratulating him for a job extremely well done and wishing he and his lovely wife Andrea, the very best in the future. He will be a success in any pursuit he may endeavor to undertake. Colonel Wilson is a professional among professionals and has brought great credit upon himself and the U.S. Air Force.

TRIBUTE TO PAMELA HARRIMAN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I was shocked and deeply saddened by Pamela Harriman's death last week in Paris. All of us in the Kennedy family cherished her friendship, and we will always have many warm memories of her close ties to our family.

In a very real sense, throughout the Reagan and Bush years, she was the First Lady of the Democratic Party. I especially admired her leadership, her extraordinary ability, and her abiding commitment to the best ideals of public service.

Pamela's friendship with the Kennedy family goes back more than half a

century. It began in the difficult days of World War II in England during my father's service as Ambassador in London. Pamela became an especially close friend of my older sister Kathleen, and her friendship with our family continued ever since.

Her marriage to Averell Harriman in 1971 brought us even closer. Averell had been a great friend and key adviser to President Kennedy on foreign policy, and his wise counsel had been instrumental in the passage of the Limited Test Ban Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In one of her most extraordinary accomplishments, Pamela became one of the pillars of the Democratic Party during the 1980's. She never lost faith in the enduring principles of our party. She held those ideals high, and she inspired legions of others to do so as well. Her leadership was especially effective in revitalizing our party in all parts of the country during the Reagan and Bush years, and President Clinton's dramatic victory in 1992 was her victory too.

Pamela's unique qualities of leadership and ability earned her great additional renown during her recent service as Ambassador to France. On a host of challenging issues ranging from the war in Bosnia to disagreements over NATO and international trade, she served with her trademark combination of skill, grace, and sensitivity that made her so respected and beloved by all who knew her and by the entire diplomatic community.

All of us in the Kennedy family admired her leadership and her statesmanship, but most of all, we were grateful for her friendship. The Nation has lost a truly remarkable public servant, and we will miss her very much.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, February 11, the Federal debt stood at \$5,305,463,575,595.03.

Five years ago, February 11, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,796,319,000,000.

Ten years ago, February 11, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,226,839,000,000.

Fifteen years ago, February 11, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,033,988,000,000.

Twenty-five years ago, February 11, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$424,352,000,000 which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion (\$4,881,111,575,595.03) during the past 25 years.

TAXPAYERS AT RISK FROM GOVERNMENT WASTE AND MISMANAGEMENT

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, today the U.S. General Accounting Office [GAO] issues its high risk series which identifies those federal programs that are especially vulnerable to waste and mismanagement. The programs

identified in these reports have cost taxpayers billions of dollars in unnecessary expenditures. Without adequate oversight from the Congress many more billions will be wasted before we are through. While the magnitude of the problems GAO has identified is shocking, I am optimistic that we have in place the tools to change Government for the better—but we must be willing to use them.

There is a tendency when we are debating how to balance the budget or when the crisis de jour erupts, for Government to ignore management issues—those which to some are tedious, time-consuming and best left to the bean-counters. While management issues sometimes tend to get swept under the carpet during high-minded policy debates, we ignore them at our peril. We cannot implement any of our policy solutions without effective public administration. In an era of static resources, if we are to balance the budget, replace aging weapon systems at the Department of Defense [DOD], or attack drug abuse, we must achieve significant savings. To find the money, we have to make Government better while cheaper and, to do that, we have to do things smarter.

GAO identifies 25 areas that we must focus on to avoid squandering billions of taxpayer dollars. For example, GAO reports that DOD wastes billions of dollars each year on uneeded and inefficient activities, is vulnerable to additional billions of dollars in waste by buying unnecessary supplies and risks overpaying contractors millions of dollars for services not rendered. It reports that the Internal Revenue Service's accounting is so poor that it cannot effectively manage the collection of the over \$113 billion owed the U.S. Government in delinquent taxes. In addition, GAO again criticizes the management of the IRS' computer modernization effort. Just last week, certain IRS officials conceded that this "modernization" has already cost the taxpayers \$4 billion and "does not work in the real world".

IRS is not the only Federal agency having a problem coming to grips with the electronic age. Over the last 6 years, the Federal Government has spent \$145 billion on computers but continues to have, according to GAO, "chronic problems harnessing the full potential of information technology to improve performance, cut costs, and/or enhance responsiveness to the public." The security of sensitive data on Government computers and how well the Government converts its old computers to run in the 2000 were also identified by GAO as areas that posed a risk to the Treasury.

Billions of dollars in waste, fraud, and abuse occur in Federal benefit programs. GAO reports, in the supplemental security income program alone, taxpayers are losing over \$1 billion a year in overpayments. The \$197 billion Medicare Program, according to GAO